A scenic photograph of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. In the foreground, a white picket fence runs across the frame, with a gravel path leading through an opening towards a small, white log cabin with red trim. The cabin has a chimney and a small porch. Behind the cabin, rolling green hills lead up to a range of snow-capped mountains under a cloudy sky. Large trees are visible on both sides of the path.

ANNUAL REPORT

Grant-Kohrs Ranch

National Historic Site

FY 05

Prepared by Laura Rotegard-Superintendent
March 2006

Cover Photo Courtesy of Heather Miller

Superintendent's Office:

The Superintendent's second year, and the Park's 28th, addressed a long standing need to define appropriate ranching operations, continued to build reliable community partnerships, and evaluated the financial sustainability of the park. The park underwent a solid fiscal analysis with first a Core Operations Evaluation, followed by creation of a Business Plan. Both processes served the park well in developing a team approach to budget management focused on a shared understanding of what is essential work, and what is desirable to do but not core. Implementing strategies from the two processes has brought immediate results, lowering fixed costs from 95% to 85%, and reconfiguring the ranching and interpretive functions for better resource stewardship, labor allocation and delivering more meaningful visitor experiences.

Staffing:

	PERMANENTS	SEASONALS	VOLUNTEERS
Management	1-GS-13 Superintendent	2 GS-7 SCA Business Plan Consultants	

Major Issues:

- Numbers of incidences, visitor accidents and staff accidents were unacceptably high March-August, prompting a concerted need to evaluate entire park program prior to 06 season.
- The number one threat to this resource is fire. Despite excellent (6-12 minute) response times by Deer Lodge VFD, lack of an efficient alarm system and no onsite presence hinders the effectiveness of a response effort. The park's #1 PMIS project priority is to get a reliable alarm system installed.
- Visitation remains stagnant, with fewer numbers. The Business Plan revealed a 10 year downward trend. Visibility and relevant interpretation remain a foremost need. The Business Plan provided positive strategies for both.
- The park's budget remains too much to the side of fixed costs. Strategies will take 3-5 years to correct.

Congressional Relations:

Relations with Montana's three congressional members strengthened in FY05 with personal visits exchanged both in Washington DC and onsite. ***New Superintendent Training*** in Washington DC in June, allowed the Superintendent to meet with staff of Senator Max Baucus, Chief of Staff to Senator Conrad Burns and Congressman Rehberg, in their offices on the Hill. Briefing packets were distributed highlighting the high level placement for the park's Visitor Center in line item construction, upcoming anniversary events in 2007, and the status of protecting the park's viewshed. Senator Burns visited the ranch in August with his staff, reviewed issues on site and complimented the staff and management on the park's direction and attention to the business plan.

Public Relations

Relationships with gateway community of Deer Lodge and with state partners continue to deepen, with the City sharing the costs of a major project, the Effluent Fields, equally with the park for the first time in 6 seasons, under terms of a new Cooperative Agreement. A first ever training fire drill on the ranch, tested the Deer Lodge VFD. They passed with flying colors. The park took part in all community parades, and staff continued to be extremely well integrated into the civic leadership of the town.

A visitor accident, a child breaking a leg in the Clark Fork River while recreating illegally during working hours, highlighted a number of issues. High water demands Law Enforcement patrols. The park needed to reinforce to the community that the park staff *will* help, is trained to help, even with an injury caused by illegal activity. We addressed this with an immediate article in the local newspaper and temporarily posted end of day river patrols with interpretive and management staff.

Superfund

Closed financial negotiations between the government's lawyers and the responsible party continued throughout the year. Progress has been made but will not be realized until FY06.

I. Administration

Administration provided excellent services to the park managing contracting, human resources, property, procurement and budget, and the training program efficiently with 2 FTE. The commitment to execute a useful Business Plan process and the Core Operations training placed additional work load on this division. The success of the Business Plan was due in large part to the stellar record keeping, institutional knowledge and organizational capabilities of this division.

Staffing:

	PERMANENTS	SEASONALS	VOLUNTEERS
Administration Division	1 GS-7 Administration Assistant		
	1 GS-11 Administrative Officer.		

Personnel

Seasonal hiring resulted in a temporary workforce of 31% female or other under-represented groups. State and regional demographics continue to frustrate park efforts to achieve workforce diversity reflective of the broader U.S. society. The park hired a seasonal handicapped employee.

One permanent position was filled: Chief of Interpretation, Education and Cultural Resources. One other vacancy occurred: Facility Manager. The Facility Manager was reclassified from a WG-4749 to a GS-1640. Staff as of 9/30/05:

Superintendent	GS-13	Laura Rotegard
Facility Manager	GS-11	vacant
Administrative Officer	GS-11	Anita Dore
Chief of Interp, Education & Cultural Resources	GS-11	David Wyrick
Curator	GS-11	Christine Ford
Natural Resource Specialist	GS-12 temporary	Benny Bobowski
Park Ranger	GS-09	Lyndel Meikle
Park Ranger	GS-09	Julie Croglio
Exhibit Specialist	GS-11	David Beaver
Maintenance Mechanic	WG-09	William King
Laborer (.5FTE)	WG-03	Jay Van Sickle
Rangeland Technician	GS-06	Dawn Kidwell
Cartographic Technician (GIS)	GS-09	Judith Huether
Museum Technician	GS-07	Peggy Gow
Administrative Support Assistant	GS-07	Karen Shoemaker

Seasonals numbered 2 irrigators, 1 gardener, 1 automotive mechanic, 4 maintenance workers, 2 park rangers, 2 park guides, 5 stay in school youths. Of the five stay in school youths, 2 were biological aids, 1 was a museum aid, 1 was a visitor use assistant and 1 was an irrigator. Employees attended off site training courses in all disciplines and over 70 on-line and telnet training courses. Seventeen employees received on-the-spot awards (cash and time off). A tel-station was installed late in the fiscal year which reduced travel time to Big Hole NB.

Budget and Property

The base budget was \$1,195,400 after Washington DC and regional assessments, uniform, and employee assistance. Relocation expense was \$23,294. Special project money was \$493,375 which included CERCLA (\$159,963) and fee demo money (\$247,635 carryover and new). The reimbursable livestock and living history income was \$22,973, expenses of \$36,551 and carryover of \$47,275. Lease income was \$1,221 with \$1,221 expenses and a carryover of \$1,270.

The Montana Conservation Corps, working under a public land corps grant, did fencing work at the ranch. The park used Utah State University Tehabi program to secure two interns.

The park received \$41,716 in excess equipment from other parks and agencies which included \$26,160 portable radios and transferred \$4,153 of excess equipment to other parks and non-profit organizations. \$530 of office furniture went into a sale conducted by GSA after the items went unsold on the last small lot sale in 2004.

II. Maintenance, Facility Management and Development

The Facility Management Division continued to provide specialized historic preservation leadership and execution of projects for the sites 93 historic structures. They also provided basic maintenance functions for the all non-historic facilities, fleet and grounds care for the formal lawns and gardens onsite while short 1FTE, due to a retirement. The park's safety program was centralized here. They completed a thorough analysis of their operations through the Core Ops and Business Planning process providing accurate data and information leading to solid, defensible statements of need.

Staffing:

	PERMANENTS	SEASONALS	Quasi-Contractors
Maintenance	1 half time WG-3 laborer	1 WG-6 gardener	8-MCC crew members
	1 full time WG-9 maintenance mechanic	1 WG 5 Auto Mechanic	
	1 GS-11 FT Exhibits Specialist	4 WG 5 Maintenance Workers	
	1 WS-8 Facility Manager(retired 7/05)		

Major Projects: (fee demo, base and cyclic or special monies)

- **PMIS project 87327 Restore Warren Hereford Ranch Complex-\$109,994.** Completed this project begun in FY 04, allowing ranching use of Warren lots for first time in 6 years of ranch management.
- **Restored two miles of deteriorated feedlot fencing, repaired, roofed and repainted seven feed houses (1330 SQ FT) and reconstructed twenty five wood gates.** This project helps the site meet GPRA long term goals Ia5 (That 50% of the historic structures on the 1998 List of Classified Structures are in good condition), and Ia7 (that 50% of landscapes on the Cultural Landscapes Inventory are in good condition).
- **PMIS project 94657 Rehabilitate HQ parking.- \$7875.** This project is 100% complete. Upon completion the project rehabilitated the HQ parking area and access roads, widened access gates and separated parking area from adjacent pasture with fencing and 2 additional gates, approximately 3,334 SQ YD.
- **Visitor Center Remodel, Micro-Grant, \$13,150** Refurnished, rewired and added fiber optic connections to existing VC. Improve lighting. Added windows and improved access. Restored signs. Re-roofed with metal roofing and built new deck and access ramps.
- **Taylor Field Ditch Lining and Monitoring Wells, \$31,573** Excavated, reshaped, installed liner, covered with native soil and reseed ed13,000 square feet of irrigation ditch. Installed 8 monitoring wells.

HS-1 Ranch House- Training staff re-roofed porch with period correct flat seamed metal roof. This also included repairs, prep and repainting of roof balustrade, and extensive framing repairs to structural members. Repaired storm damaged gutters and re-hung. Staff removed encroaching cottonwood trees and repaired garden handrail. Rebuilt basement window covers.

Ongoing Preservation Work to Historic Structures

- HS-04 Coal Shed. Constructed false wall to hide electrical mains
- HS-6 Grainery- Rebuilt fence and gate.
- HS-07 Horse Barn Repaired to working order and preserved three access doors
- HS-10 Oxen Barn- Reseted dry laid stone foundation, reconstruct missing window sash
- HS-13 L-Barn- Cleaned and reorganized interior maintenance storage spaces. Rebuild gates.
- HS-15 T-Barn- Installed handicap access ramp at north elevation.
- HS-18 Grainery- Installed rub rails on exterior elevations
- HS-20 Privy- Repaired and re-roofed with cedar shingles
- HS-64 Red Barn- Re-built gates.
- HS-69 Loading Ramp- Reconstructed ramp and repaired to working order

Special Requests:

- Completed construction and painting of Mountain Spring Wagon running works. Repaired two ranch wagons to safe working order.
- Rebuilt Stewart Field gate.
- Built 4 picnic tables and 6 sets of stilts for visitors.
- Re-Constructed 7 historic feed troughs for feed lots.
- Assisted the Resource Management Division in securing the effluent irrigation system for winter and setting up the winter watering system for site livestock. Assisted in moving and working cattle throughout the year.
- Provided support for the park's six special events. Constructed 24'X24' mobile stage for event support.
- Did maintenance and repairs to horse drawn equipment. Refit Case tractor hydraulics for use of post pounder.

Risk Management (Safety)

- First Aid Kits updated throughout Park
- CPR/First Aid for staff completed, fire extinguisher training completed by all staff, and training in fatigue, lifting, summer heat issues, and hazardous spills procedures completed by all staff.
- Safety Walk-about completed/ 40+ issues effectively addressed

III. Resources Stewardship

Division of Natural Resources & Ranching Management

The Division of Natural Resources maintained a high profile in the region and the country with the National Livestock & Grazing Coordinator position tagged onto the Chief position. Along with extremely complex work in analyzing the ranching function for the Business Plan, the division led the network in developing vital signs and defining grassland ecosystem needs. At home, ranch practices improved, and the care of the cultural landscapes increased significantly with the interpretation of the Cultural Landscape Report to staff and assignment of documentation projects to seasonals and interns. The division is stabilizing and executing long range efforts to meld the science of the landscape with the ranching practices, making great success towards sustainability. A good growing season helped to further grassland restoration by providing great cover in native grasses, ending a 10 year drought cycle that had encouraged weed growth.

Staffing:

	PERMANENTS	SEASONALS	VOLUNTEERS
Natural Resources	1-GS-12 Chief- * Natural Resource Mgt. Specialist	2 Bio-techs (2 stay-in-schools)	
	1- GS-5/6/7 Range Tech. SCEP position		
Ranching/Cultural	1-GS-9 GIS Tech.	3 Irrigators	10-15 teamsters

Landscape	half-time permanent	(2 stay-in-schools)	
			1000+ hours

* Serves as the Service-wide Livestock Management Coordinator – 25% collateral duty (GS-12 is a temporary promotion that began in April)

Significant Achievements:

- The WHOLE RANCHING OPERATION was examined for 1) cost effectiveness, 2) meeting livestock and grassland care standards, 3) appropriateness to park's interpretive mission. Business Plan suggested sweeping changes, being implemented in FY06.
- LIVESTOCK that eat weeds - this second year of the project demonstrated that the 'training' exercises with the park's livestock continued to work well. The behavior of livestock was modified to include weeds in their diets
- FMP/PRESCRIBED BURN completed – a successful prescribed burn was conducted.
- COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS maintained or strengthened - the resource division maintains the park's most complex and controversial program. Controversies such as superfund, effluent irrigation, and working within an agricultural community regularly shine as neighbors recognize how their ranches operate differently than GRKO, a federal ranch. During the year we have worked to successfully maintain or strengthen many internal and external relationships.
- VITAL SIGNS SELECTED – through the support and guidance the ROCKY MOUNTAIN Inventory and Monitoring Network the park completed a series of vital signs workshops. The work culminated in a May meeting in which the Technical Committee, Board of Directors, and Science Panel met to discuss and approve vital signs. Ben Bobowski served as Chair of the Technical Committee.
- ROCKY MOUNTAIN CESU – we continued to successfully work with the CESU through agreements, proposal development and technical assistance. This program as greatly assisted this park by providing support necessary to take resource management to the next level.
- EXOTIC PLANT MANAGEMENT TEAM – the EPMT treated weeds during three separate trips helping the park to exceed GPRA goals.

Published Abstracts and Professional Presentations:

- Tehabi- Field Studies in Collaborative Natural Resource Stewardship & Internship in Collaborative Natural Resource Stewardship, undergraduate/graduate (2005)
- University of Montana, Grant-Kohrs Ranch Science Teacher's Workshop, July 2005
- Baldwin, B. Bobowski, M. Brunson. 2005. **Tehabi: An Internship Program for the Next Generation of Resource Managers.** An *INVITED oral presentation* at: Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Network National Meeting, June 21-22, 2005. Hosted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington D.C.

IV. Resources and Visitor Protection

Division of Interpretation, Education and Cultural Resources

The Division of Cultural Resources/Education and Interpretation stepped up to a very challenging year. With the new Chief of Interpretation arriving two weeks before the start of the busy season the staff pulled together to create innovative programs, events, workshops and activities. They researched, developed and presented a variety of new programs to present daily and for special occasions. One new event was added in partnership with a local nonprofit group. Community involvement was increased through participation in many of the local festival and parades. Cultural Resources was able to focus more on archival activities while helping other parks with their programs. With challenging budgetary constraints and increased accountability requirements facing the Cultural Resources program in the National Park Service, Grant-Kohrs Ranch is among the leading parks in the region having effective and organized museum, archeology, and cultural resource management practices. The division moved forward with a strong desire to craft core programs in the spirit of the Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site's enabling legislation and mission. The division grappled with the imminent decommissioning of the park's sole LE, devising backup and new response procedures in concert with the Superintendent's work with the County Sheriff, to be implemented in FY06.

Staffing:

	PERMANENTS	SEASONALS	VOLUNTEERS
Interpretation Division	1-GS 11 Chief	2 GS-5 Rangers	8 Summer Hosts
	1 GS 9 ranger	2 GS 4 Guide	5 Winter Hosts
	1 GS 9 ranger STF	1 GS 3 Visitor Use Assistant	1 Curatorial Assistant
Cultural Resources	1 GS-11 Curator	1 GS-2 Museum Aid	
	1 GS 7 Museum tech		

Accomplishments:

- The development of a promotions committee produced a RACK CARD from joint grant by Glacier Natural History Association and Gold West for \$5,800 with 75,000 cards being distributed to visitor centers and motels throughout the state. This proved to be responsible for ten percent of our visitation.
- The site's first formal education program is now in its fifth year. The TEACHERS WORKSHOP was well attended and had high praise from the participants.
- SALES INCREASES OF 29% , despite lower visitation resulted from new items developed by park staff, a thorough review of product with Glacier Natural History Association staff and implementing winter hours through the Winter Host volunteer program
- New programs such as a historic ranching tour, cowboy presentations, special talks and three new workshops at varied times were added to the visitor's interpretive experience.
- A wagon and implement display was created for the Big Sky Draft Horse Expo on the fairgrounds in Deer Lodge.
- In August the first "Grant Family Reunion" was hosted by the park with sixty descendants from Johnny Grant's Family in attendance. Dayleann Pepper a descendant of Johnny Grant donated a watercolor painting of Grant believed to be painted in 1865 in St. Louis.
- A partnership was created with the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program to work with Deer Lodge Schools on our site.

- New outdoor banners were designed to help announce our special events and to promote our site at other community events.
- Through a micro-grant and the staff's diligence the Visitor Center was remodeled to be more functional and visitor inviting. This included a beautiful aerial photograph of the ranch taken by a Glacier NPS employee, and a local pilot who volunteered his plane and time, a new roof, porch, lighting and heating system.

The Visitor Center remodel added:



New roof and accessible porch



New exhibits /Aerial photograph of the ranch

A



Staff work space, visitor friendly design, and better sales space

- New events, programs and activities added much to the visitor experience.



Wagon Restoration



Hot Dogs and History



A draft horse veterinarian program

- Traditional events grew with additional activities and provided some of the standard programs people love to return for.



Volunteers haying at “Western Heritage Days” and “Haying Days” contributed to re-creating a crowd pleasing and significant piece of our history.

- Our signature event, “ Western Heritage Days” offered programs and activities for kids of all ages.





- Grant-Kohrs Ranch is committed to helping the community by being involved in local events such as parades, “Territorial Days”, “Draft Horse and Mule Play Days”, “The Big Sky Draft Horse Expo” and civic organizations.

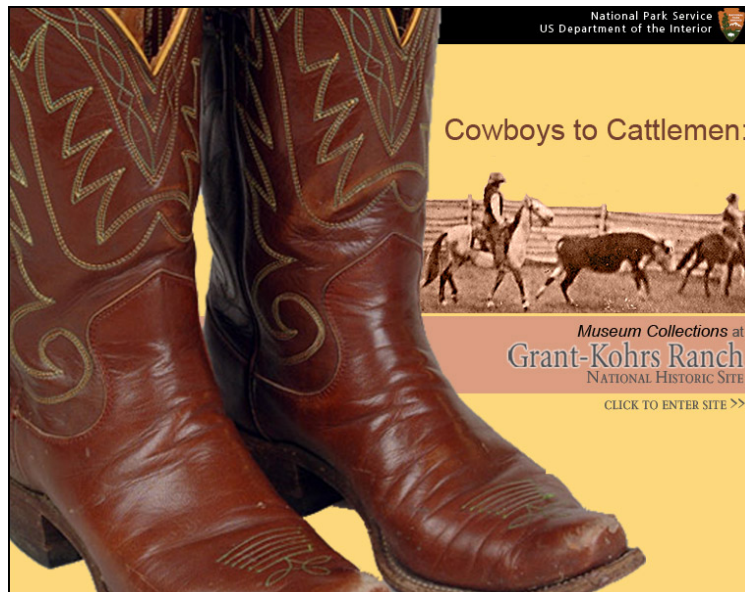


Community involvement gave local children a chance to experience “Halloween at the Ranch”



and birders a chance to explore at “Walk Away from Winter”

- A “Winter Host” volunteer program is established. Keeping the Visitor Contact Station open during winter months had become difficult. Members of the local community helped by keeping the doors open and the stove burning to greet the occasional winter visitor.
- Cowboys to Cattlemen: Museum Collections at Grant-Kohrs Ranch, a web-based exhibit was unveiled through cooperative effort with the NPS Museum Management Program in Washington, the 18th park to join this fantastic national network.



- An Integrated Pest Management Plan training video for small museums was produced through a Rocky Mountain CESU grant. Project presented at George Wright Society Conference. Component also included revisions to site’s museum IPM Plan focusing on control of cluster flies in the ranch house and efficiency of monitoring.





Archival quality pad installed under historic carpet in Kohrs Ranch House to prevent staining from residual coal dust and elimination of pest habitat.



Superintendent Laura Rotegard accepts the donation of the Johnny Grant watercolor from Dayleann Pepper, Arthur Dale Kinder, Jean Kinder, and Demarius Bowen.

- Curator participated in Grand Teton National Park first Collection Management Plan and the board of Museums Association of Montana. The Museum Technician is on the State Historic Records Advisory Council.
- The park library was reorganized and information uploaded to Voyager by two Volunteers In the Parks

Partnerships

Volunteer Program- Twenty eight (28) new volunteers joined the park staff in FY05, boosting hours **47% over FY04**, from 2800 to approximately 5,200 hours for a value of \$92,857 dollars in work contributed, or 7% of the annual budget. Total volunteers reached 97 persons helping out in 4 divisions.

Interpretation/Events	3,455.5 hours
Natural Resources/Ranching	1,674.5 hours
Curatorial support	141 hours
Management Support	20 hours
TOTAL	5,291

Seven reached the 250 hour mark in a single season, and 2 met the 500 hours milestone. Honors were given to ten year veteran teamsters Kent and Mary Lou Connor. We combined our volunteer appreciation dinner with our haying weekend and had over 40 volunteers attend the dinner in their honor.

City of Deer Lodge/ Powell County-Agreements for the Effluent Project, for Structural Fire Assistance and for municipal services like garbage pickup, keep this neighbor close to the park in all operations. With a new 3-year cooperative agreement (2005-2008), the City has stepped up to equal responsibility for the Effluent Program and expended diligent effort to find a solution that does not include park lands post 2008. With a first ever real fire drill, the VFD strengthened its ability to handle a fire event quickly and in coordination with park staff. Powell County Sherriff's office responded to approximately 10 false intrusion alarms, and 2 real incidences in support of visitor and resources safety, under a cooperative agreement to back up park personnel. Conversations with the County Sherriff have assured the park of continued commitment and a high level of service in the upcoming decommissioning of the park's only LE professional in FY06

Montana Stockgrowers- We opened up communications with a preeminent industry non-profit affiliated with the history of the ranch. We attended and exhibited in their trade show at their annual meeting, implemented principles of their Undaunted Stewardship program, and have mutually supportive relationships with staff and the Board.

They have stepped up to sit on the active working group of an anniversary cattle drive event we are developing for 2008.

USFS/BLM-Execution of a flawless prescribed burn demonstrated the maturing of a multi-agency effort to manage park resources effectively. Forest Service operations continue to enhance park capabilities, along with fire support from Glacier National Park.

Glacier Natural History Association-The park centralized the duties of liaison under the new Chief of Interpretation, which resulted in cleaner communications, better work planning with GNHA staff and increased fiscal and emotional support from the Board and staff of our primary partner; overall, a much improved relationship.

Bar U Ranch- Parks Canada- We are pursuing our first formal international Sister Park agreement with the assistance of WASO- International Affairs. The Bar U Ranch is Canada's solitary ranching history site, seven hours north of Deer Lodge, in Longview, Alberta. Due to the Business Plan, we were able to benchmark their operations as well as verify our historical connections confirming that both ranches were tightly involved with each other and equally influential in the cattle industry that barely recognized the 49th parallel. We hope to gain interpretive relevancy from replicating some of their excellent programs, they expressed interest in our exemplary historic preservation achievements.

Academic partnerships-Continued success with CESU University of Montana, and Tehabi sponsor Utah State in FY05 brought good interns to the park, that are diversity candidates for FY06 They accomplished pertinent research and support. See other division reports. We invited Western University/Dillon staff and leadership over for a complete day of orientation to the park's programs and departed knowing we can develop mutually beneficial projects with their Colleges of Education, Equine Sciences, and Environmental Studies. We will pursue this under the existing CESU agreement with Uof M, which Western is part of.

Conclusion:

With the completion of the Core Operation Analysis and the Business Plan, the park has a solid blueprint for streamlining and improving both public service and the bottom line with less than a 5% shortfall (revised 3/06). FY05 strengthened the leadership team not only in filling and promoting into vacancies, but in focusing the four top positions on core work, and the park's legacy. The four now advise and analyze issues considering the whole ranch/park effect, not just their programs. Relationships with partners are substantially better than they were in FY04 increasing productivity and public service. Support from the Regional Office and staff has been exceptional in supplying funds and technical assistance for improving situations with neighbors, staff and the visitors in specially funded projects that solved festering problems.

In FY05 we identified our needs for improvement. In FY06, we set up systems to better care for our visitors, our livestock, and our resources, while balancing our finances carefully. Even with good management and execution, we are still a site greatly influenced by the vagaries of weather and the seasons. When the winter is easy, the sun and rain kind, and grass is plentiful, like it was in FY05, all the park's goals are easier to meet, and morale has a spring in its step. FY05 was a banner year for our natural systems providing the sustenance that a ranch requires, even though our six events days as a whole, had abysmal weather, reducing our visitation numbers significantly. We can hope that FY06 will continue the bounty of the rain and good grass, and provide a little more warmth and sunshine. The park is poised to grow into optimal performance, whatever the weather brings.